

A Fourteen-Century Historical Narrative of Sufism: The Case of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima li-Kitab al-Ibar*

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INTRODUCTION

Wali al-Din Abu Zayd 'Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad, known as Ibn Khaldun (d. 1402) was among the icons of Muslim intellectual legacy. He was considered one of the most outstanding personalities of Arabo-Muslim culture in the period of its decline. Generally, he was regarded one of the greatest historians, political scientists, sociologists and philosophers in the Muslim world.¹

Over the last two centuries, Ibn Khaldun's thought has increasingly attracted the interest of scholars - Muslim and non-Muslim alike. Many works had been devoted to this great personality. In different ways, scholars from various fields of study - sociologists, historians, political scientists, philosophers, educationists and even linguists, have claimed him as their subject. This has subsequently made him a very familiar and notable intellectual figure in modern time.

Born into an Arab family, Ibn Khaldun was claimed to be originally from Hadramawt, Southern Hijaz. His ancestors migrated and settled in Seville since the beginning of the Muslim conquest.² In his childhood, he underwent the traditional Islamic religious education i.e. the usual pattern of the Muslim religious education of that time including the reading of the Quran and the study of the Prophet's traditions within the Maliki School of law to which he belonged.³ He also studied other subjects including the fundamentals of Islamic theology, the rudiments of the religious law as well as the elements of mysticism. At the same time he also undertake other 'non-religious', rational and philosophic sciences including logic, mathematics, natural philosophy and metaphysics. In addition, he also studied relevant disciplines such as linguistics, biography and history, as well as the art of scholarly writing.⁴

He was deeply rooted in Islamic background both intellectual and social, at the same time holding several high government posts in Granada, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt.⁵ He was even at one time

appointed as chief Maliki qadi in Egypt.⁶ Despite his notable achievement in various social and political fields, his actual fame nonetheless, rested upon his great intellectual legacy. He was praised as a precursor who broke with traditional Islamic culture.⁷ His monumental work, from which he earned his highest reputation, the *Muqaddima*, has been much admired by scholars throughout the ages.

As a fourteen-century Muslim scholar, Ibn Khaldun was not known as Sufi, at least in the manner we recognise Muhasibi, Sha'rani, Qushayri and others. However, his contribution to the study of Sufism could not be simply put aside. In his *Muqaddima*, Ibn Khaldun devoted a special section, narrating and evaluating Sufi tradition practised in his time.

This paper is meant to examine the depth of Ibn Khaldun's understanding of Sufism based on a passage in the *Muqaddima* in which he gives a special attention to Sufism. The idea is to explore his conception, and more importantly, the kind of approaches and attitude he adopted towards Sufism. Apart from that, this paper would also present some insights of the fourteen-century Sufism in the context of socio-historical continuum of Muslim society.

SUFISM AND THE SPIRITUAL SCIENCES

Based on Ibn Khaldun's order of exposition, Sufism and spiritual science falls into the fourth and the last of the category of traditional conventional sciences. In an explicit statement, Ibn Khaldun considers these two sciences a 'branch' of religious law (*min 'ulum al-shar'iyya*). Historically, both sciences follow the same process of evolutionary development, as do other religious sciences, and of course they have a certain degree of impact and domination in the society. On this ground, they deserve a special attention especially in the context of Muslim community as well as in the history of Islamic science.

For analytical purposes the passage may be divided into at least four distinct parts as follows: 1) a brief introduction on the origin of Sufism, 2) *idrak* (perception) and the nature of Sufism, 3) the significance of *kashf* and the process of Sufism, 3) a lengthy discussion and critics on the 'recent Sufis' and 4) Ibn Khaldun's personal assessment.

THE ORIGIN OF SUFISM

Ibn Khaldun proclaims the science of Sufism at the very beginning as a science belongs to the category of religious law that originated within Islam.⁸ He does not give any clear definition, as he does to other religious sciences. Nevertheless, he explains that 'it is based upon constant application to divine worship - complete devotion to God, aversion to the false splendour of the world, abstinence from the pleasure, property and position to which the great mass aspires and retirement from the world into solitude for divine worship'.⁹ Although, while dealing with this subject, Ibn Khaldun tends to confine himself only within the milieu of Islam, it has to be noted here that science of the same nature does also exist in other religious traditions. This science is generally referred as mysticism. Despite the fact that it occurs in other religious traditions, Sufism (*sufiyya* or *mutasawwifa*), an Arabic term, could certainly claim its origin from Islam. Ibn Khaldun does not seem to agree in this point with al-Qushayri (d. 465/1074) who believed that *Sufi* is merely a nickname (*laqab*), which has no etymology or analogy in Arabic language. Instead, Ibn Khaldun is more inclined towards the opinion that the word comes from *suf* (woollen garment). In fact, he shares this opinion with many other sufi scholars.¹⁰ This is characterised by the fact that the sufis wore woollen garments as opposed to people wearing gorgeous garments. This word later came to represent asceticism, retirement from the world and devotion for divine worship.¹¹ In the early days of Islam, Sufism was the common practice of the first and the second generation Muslims (the *sahaba* and the *tabi'in*). It was considered as 'the path of truth and right guidance'.¹² As far as Ibn Khaldun is concerned, Sufism at that time was considered as merely to represent asceticism, retirement and devotion to divine worship and not a proper science. It was not until second/eight century that it took shape as a proper structured science.¹³

IDRAK (PERCEPTION) AND THE NATURE OF SUFISM

The next point touched by Ibn Khaldun is *idrak* (perception)¹⁴. He employs philosophical theory of *idrak* in his attempt to justify the existence of the "world" that is peculiar to Sufism. *Idrak*, says Ibn Khaldun, is of two kinds, i.e. perception of science and knowledge (*al-*

'ulum wa-'l-ma'arif) and perception of 'states' (*ahwal*). The first kind of *idrak* concerns matters of knowledge including certain (*yaqin*), hypothetical doubt (*zann*) as well as imagery and doubtful (*al-shakk wa-'l-wahm*). The second kind of perception concerns matters pertaining to states (*ahwal*) such as joy and grief, anxiety and relaxation, satisfaction, anger, patience, gratefulness and similar things.¹⁵ The latter is peculiar only to the world of Sufism.

The spiritual exertion and worship of the *Sufi* would necessarily lead him to achieve a 'state' (*hal*).¹⁶ This is the result of his strive (*mujahada*). According to Ibn Khaldun the state may be a kind of divine worship (*naw' al-'ibada*), then it goes together to become a station (*maqam*) to the *sufi* novice, or it may not be a kind of divine worship but merely the attribute of the soul (*sifat hasila li-'l-nafs*). In this process, the *sufi* will experience the progress from station to station until he reaches the ultimate station, i.e. the recognition of *tawhid* and *ma'rifa* (gnosis).¹⁷

Ibn Khaldun explains that obedience and sincerity (*al-ta'a wa-'l-ikhlas*) with the guidance of the faith (*iman*) become the essential requisite for the *Sufi* novice to be successful in the process. Accordingly, the novice must also follow the right procedure. If there is any shortcomings or defects (*taqsir fi-'l-natijah*), the *Sufi* novice has to follow the procedure of self-scrutiny of all his actions. In *Sufi* term, this procedure is called *muhasaba*.¹⁸ The successfulness of the *Sufi* path, according to Ibn Khaldun, depends entirely upon *muhasaba*. The novice performs the *muhasaba* with the help of his 'internal taste' (*dhawq*) which is also a kind of mystical and spiritual experience.¹⁹

Later on, Sufism becomes a peculiar form of behaviour and has a peculiar kind of linguistic terminology. New terminology and technical terms are created and identified to facilitate the understanding of the ideas and the concepts. Gradually, it forms a special discipline in its own class - as another kind of religious law (*shari'a*). It follows the same evolution as undergone by other kinds of religious law. Hence, religious law, as far as Ibn Khaldun is concerned is categorised into two kinds - one is special to jurists and muftis and another one is peculiar to *Sufis*.

The *Sufis*, as do jurists, wrote down structured and systematic works on the subject. Ibn Khaldun brings examples of the works of Muhasibi (d. 243/857), Qushayri and Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234@5) who published among others *Kitab al-Ri'aya*, *Kitab al-Risala* and *'Awarif al-Ma'arif* respectively. Another example which combined the two kinds of religious sciences was *Kitab al-Ihya'* by al-Ghazzali.²⁰

KASHF (REVEALMENT) AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN THE PROCESS OF SUFISM

The next point dealt by Ibn Khaldun is *kashf*²¹ (revealment or the removal of the veil). Based on Ibn Khaldun's remark, *kashf* is experienced by the *Sufis* as a result of their mystical exertion or strive (*mujahada*), isolation or retirement (*khulwa*) and remembrance (*dhikr*).²² By achieving this state of *kashf*, the *Sufi* now beholds the divine world which the ordinary person (*sahib al-hiss*) cannot perceive.

The author also provides some explanation on the nature and process of *kashf*. This experience happens, he says

...when the spirit turns from the external sense perception to inner (perception), the senses weaken and the spirit grows strong. It gains predominance and a new growth. The *dhikr* exercise helps to bring that about. It is like food to make the spirit grow. The spirit continues to grow and to increase. It had been knowledge. Now, it becomes vision. The veil of sensual perception is removed and the soul realises its essential existence. This is identical with perception. The spirit now is ready for holy gifts, for the science of divine presence and for the outpouring of Deity (*al-fath al-Ilahi*). Its essence realises its own true character and draws close to the highest sphere, the sphere of the angels. The removal of the veil often happens to people who exert themselves in mystical exercise. They perceive the realities of existence as no one does.²³

This quotation explains quite sufficiently how the process of *kashf* takes place. Here, Ibn Khaldun quite extensively employs *Sufi* technical terms which of course have to be understood within its own particular context. Terms such as *al-mawahib al-rabbaniyya* (divine gifts), *al-'ulum al-ladunniyya* (esoteric knowledge or knowledge direct from God) and *al-fath al-Ilahi* (the outpouring of Deity) are among the examples.

Kashf as a concept certainly has its particular importance in Sufism. Ibn Khaldun relates this mystical experience with the ability of prophesying future happenings. The *Sufi* who has achieved this level will be able to perceive or to see the future happenings in advance. The Prophet's companion and the great *Sufis*, says Ibn Khaldun, have achieved this experience. However, they had not paid much attention in it. They keep this experience in themselves without telling others. They even considered this experience as 'tribulation' (*mihna*) and therefore try to escape whenever they afflict them.²⁴

Ibn Khaldun takes this opportunity also to criticise what he considers as the wrong attitude of the recent *Sufis* (*qawman min al-muta'akhhirin*) regarding the experience of *kashf*. This criticism, as he himself admits, is based on al-Ghazzali's *Kitab al-Ihya'*.²⁵ Ibn Khaldun is not happy with the attitude of the recent *Sufis* for having given too much attention to the experience of *kashf* unlike their predecessors i.e., the first and the second generation. They even went up to the extent of establishing a different method in 'mortifying the powers of sensual perception and nourishing the reasoning spirit with *dhikr* exercise'.²⁶ Through this method, they believed that the soul would fully grow and attain its own essential perception (*yahsulu li-nafsi-hi idraku-ha al-ladhi la-ha min dhati-ha*). When this state is attained, they believe that 'the whole existence is encompassed by the perceptions of the soul, that the essences of existence are revealed to them, and that they perceive the reality of all the essences from the divine throne'.²⁷

Regarding the question the soundness of *kashf*, Ibn Khaldun's stance is quite clear, that it cannot be considered sound or truthful unless it originates in straight forwardness (*kana nashi'an 'an al-istiqama*). This means that the experience of *kashf* can only be considered sound if it fulfils a certain set of criteria. Perhaps this argument can be seen as Ibn Khaldun's attempt to differentiate between the real and actual Islamic mystical experience and other kinds of ascetic experience. So far as this notion is concerned, *istiqama* is the pre-requisite to attaining the true and complete (*sahihan kamilan*) experience of the *kashf*. However, Ibn Khaldun acknowledges that the experience and explanation of *kashf* by the *Sufis* cannot be appreciated rationally (either by *burhan* or *dalil*) because 'who did not share their approach will not be able to understand their mystical and ecstatic experiences'. Argument of proofs are of no use since it belongs solely to intuitive experience.²⁸ Even the *muftis* also have no decisive judgement in this regard. They partly disapprove and partly accept them.

What is then the significance of *kashf* in the whole affair of Sufism? As indicated earlier, the early *Sufis* among the *sahaba* and the *tabi'in* had not shown their interest in *kashf*. They had no desire to obtain *kashf* nor had they any concern with propagating their mystical or *kashf* experiences. Only the recent *Sufis* seemed to have been more preoccupied with *kashf*. Although Ibn Khaldun does not explicitly mention why this concept is significant, as a matter of analysis we may suggest some reasons. First, of course, it is exclusively experienced by those who had undergone the *Sufi* mystical path of *mujahada*, followed the right

procedure and attained the *maqam*. Those experiences are peculiar to the *Sufis* and those who do not follow the Sufi path will not be able to obtain it. Second, this exclusive experience was considered as source of knowledge and it had been utilised to maintain the elitism, exclusiveness, status quo and authenticity of later development of Sufism. Moreover, it constituted as one of the most important topics in the development Sufi literary tradition.

CRITIQUES ON SUFISM

Before entering into a lengthy criticism and commentary on the activities of certain groups in Sufism, Ibn Khaldun provides some explanation on the concept of God's transcendence. Perhaps, by such explanation, he wants to give some background knowledge to his reader about issues that he is going to touch afterwards. It has something to do with the belief of certain quarter of later *Sufis* who had promoted what he considers as strange ideas such as *tajalli* (emanation), *hulul* (incarnation) as well as ideas of the same nature.

Ibn Khaldun coins the concept of God's transcendence in the word *mubayana* (separateness). For him, separateness has two meanings. The first meaning implies God's location and direction while the second meaning is being distinct and different.²⁹ Again, it should be noted that this particular passage on concept of God's transcendence does not appear in Beirut edition of the *Muqaddima*.³⁰ For Ibn Khaldun, proper understanding of this concept is essential since it has something to do with the doctrine of *tawhid*. Ibn Khaldun obviously put forth this point to encounter the theory of absolute oneness (*al-wahda al-mutlaqa*) proposed by the groups of later *Sufis*. They understood and explained this concept in their own way based on the theory established by *ahl al-mazahir*, people who propose the theory of manifestation. In dealing with this subject, Ibn Khaldun gathers information particularly from the writings of al-Farghani, Ibn Dihaq, al-Harawi, Ibn Sina and others.

First he takes the example from the writings of al-Farghani,³¹ who happened to be the commentator of Ibn al-Farid's poems. Ibn Khaldun considers the works of al-Farghani as representing the school of *ahl al-tajalli wa-'l-mazahir wa-'l-hadrat* (the people of emanation, manifestation and presence).³² Essentially, al-Farghani's idea is based upon his understanding of the order of the world of existence from the Creator (*sudur al-wujud 'an al-fa'il wa-tartibi-hi*). All existence, according to al-Farghani, comes forth from the attribute of uniqueness (*wahdaniyya*),

which is the manifestation of unity (*ahadiyya*). Both *wahdaniyya* and *ahadiyya* come from *al-dhat al-karima* (the noble essence), which is identical with oneness (*'ayn al-wahda*). This process is called *tajalli* (emanation). The first degree of it is *tajalli al-dhat* (emanation of the essence). This idea is based on a tradition transmitted by the *Sufis* 'I was a concealed treasure. I wanted to be known. Therefore I created the creatures so that they might know Me'.³³ Presumably, it was this tradition that becomes the basis when this school built up its cosmological idea and explained how the process of creation takes place. This idea is characterised by the theory of emanation (*ifada*). From the perfection (*kamal*) emanates the order of existence and particularisation of the realities. This reality is identified as the world of ideas (*'alam al-ma'ani*) and the perfect presence (*al-hadrat al-kamaliyya*) and the Muhammadan reality (*haqiqa Muhammadiyya*). This 'world' contains realities of attributes, the *luh*, the *qalam* as well as prophets and messengers. All these are the particularisation of Muhammadan reality. From these, other realities come forth in the atomic presence (*al-hadra al-haba'iyya*), which is in the level of ideas (*martaba al-mithal*). From there then come forth, in succession, the throne (*'arash*), the seat (*kursi*), the spheres (*aflak*) then the world of elements (*'anasir*) then the world of composition (*'alam al-tarkib*). All these worlds are in the world of mending (*ratq*), when they manifest or emanate, they are in the world of rending (*fatq*).³⁴

Ibn Khaldun identifies another group, as those who believe in the absolute oneness (*al-wahda al-mutlaqa*). He sees the idea of this group as even stranger than the first one. This theory believes that everything in existence is possessing power in them that can bring the realities, forms and matters of the existing things into being.³⁵ The combined universal power (*al-quwwa al-jami'a li-'l-kull*) without any particularisation is divine power. This power is distributed over all existing things whether they are universals or particulars, combining and comprising them in every aspect, with regard to appearance and hiddenness and with regard to form and matter - everything is one. This is identical with divine essence (*fa-kullu wahid wa-huwa nafs al-dhat al-Ilahiyya*). Clarifying this idea, Ibn Khaldun utilises the analogy made by Ibn Dihaq³⁶ who compares this idea with the philosophers' idea of the existence of colours. The existence of colours is predicated upon light. It is in the same way that the existence of all existing sensibilia are predicated upon the existence of the faculty of perception (*al-mudrak al-'aqli*).³⁷

Ibn Khaldun identifies the third group as the school of incarnation and oneness (*al-hulul wa-'l-wahda*). This idea was propagated by, among

others, al-Harawi in his *Kitab al-maqamat*. He was followed by Ibn 'Arabi, Ibn Sab'in (d. 669/1271) and their pupils as well as Ibn al-Farid and Najm al-Din al-Isra'ili (d. 677/1208).³⁸ To this group Ibn Khaldun uncompromisingly alleges them as being strongly influenced by the extremist neo-Isma'ili Shi'a's idea of incarnation and the divinity of the imam. In addition, their idea of *qutb* (pole)³⁹ is quite closely corresponding to Shi'a's idea about their chiefs (*nuqaba'*). According to Ibn Khaldun, many jurists and muftis rejected this idea.

It should also be noted here that, in trying to give a more clear picture on divine oneness, Ibn Khaldun has inserted a quotation from Abu Mahdi 'Isa b. al-Zayyat.⁴⁰ This quotation includes some passage of al-Harawi's *Maqamat* particularly on the theory of oneness.

SUFISM ASSESSED

Ibn Khaldun recapitulates that the entire discussion of Sufism can be summarised in four main topics. The first topic covers *mujahadat* (strives), *adhwaq* (the tastes), *muhasaba al-nafs* (self-scrutiny or self-examination) in order to obtain the mystical experience. The second topic is *kashf* (revelment) and the perceivable spiritual realities (*al-haqiqa al-mudraka min 'alam al-ghayb*) such as divine attributes, the throne and so on. The third topic is the activities in the various worlds and among the various created things (*al-'awalim wa-il-akwan*) including the kinds of *karamat* (divine grace). The fourth topic is *shatahat* (ecstatic utterances),⁴¹ the expression that are suspect in their plain meaning (*alfaz muhama al-zahir*).

Towards the end of the passage, Ibn Khaldun draws the attention of his reader about the right and true *Sufi* practice, as he himself believes. Again, he recalls his reader to observe the practice and the attitude of the early *Sufis* (*salaf al-mutasawwifa*) as an ideal model. Those early *Sufis* have no desire to remove the veil, or to have such supernatural perception. Their main concern is to follow their models. They always turn away and pay no attention to supernatural perception. They always give priority to religious law (*shari'a*), which is more certain than any mystical experience. They even forbade the prolonged discussion of those matters. Finally, Ibn Khaldun advises that this should be the belief, attitude and practice of all *Sufi* novices (*murid*).⁴²

1. Issawi, Charles, *An Arab Philosophy of History: Selections from the Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldun of Tunis (1332-1406)*, London, 1950. p. 7

2. See, EI2, III, 825
3. See for eg., Fischel, Walter J., 'Ibn Khaldun's Autobiography' in the Light of External Arabic Sources', in *Studi Orientalistici in onore de G. Levi Della Vida*, 2 vols., Roma 1956. p. 294. A quite comprehensive picture of Ibn Khaldun's life and activities may also be obtained from Lakhsassi, 'Ibn Khaldun' in Nasr, Seyyed Hussain and Oliver Leaman (eds.). *History of Islamic Philosophy*, 2.vols, London & New York, 1996. p. 351-2
4. See eg., Mahdi, Muhsin, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History: A Study of The Philosophic Foundation of The Science of Culture*, London, 1957. p. 28
5. See, REP, IV, 624
6. See e.g., Fischel, 'Ibn Khaldun's Autobiography', p. 298-9
7. See, Corbin, Henry, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, Liadain Sherrad (trans.), London, 1993. p. 278
8. Q.III:60, R.3:76
9. Q.III:60, R.3:76
10. Eg. Al-Sarraj, etc. The derivation of the name *sufi* has in fact long been subject of dispute among scholars and researchers. A number of words have been suggested as the possible origin of Sufism such as *safa'* (purity), *saff* (rank) and *suffa* (bench). For a more detailed see also, Bisyuni, Ibrahim, *Nash'at al-Tasawwuf al-Islami*, Misr, 1969. p. 9-11. cf., al-Qushayri, Abu al-Qasim b. Hawazin, *al-Risala al-Qushayriyya*, Misr, 1940. p. 8, and Ansari, Muhammad Abdul Haq, *Sufism and Shariah: A Study of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's Effort to Reform Sufism*, Leicester, 1986. p. 31-2
11. Q.III: 60, R.3: 77
12. Q.III: 60, R.3: 76
13. Cf., Al-Azmeh, Aziz, *Ibn Khaldun: An Essay in Reinterpretation*, London, 1982.p. 107
14. Q.III: 60.16, R.3: 77. The concept of *idrak* has been detailed out by Ibn Khaldun in his prefatory remarks to Chapter Six of the *Muqaddima*, particularly in the first topic on man's ability to think. See, Q.II: 363 ff, R.2: 411 ff. Cf., Casewit, Stephen, 'The Mystical Side of The Muqaddima: Ibn Khaldun's View of Sufism', in *IQ*, vol.29, no.3, 1985. p. 173
15. See, Q.III: 60-1, R.3:78-9
16. Cf., Ansari, Muhammad Abdul Haq, *Sufism and Shariah: A Study of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's Effort to Reform Sufism*, Leicester, 1986. p. 108-9
17. Q.III: 61, R.3: 78
18. See, Q.III: 62.6-7, R.3: 79, Cf., Baldwin, C., 'Mohasaba: The *Sufi* way of Self-examination' in *SUFI*, 17, 1993. p. 32.36. Although the *sufi* concept of muhasaba may be traditionally associated with Harith b. Asad al-Muhasibi (d. 243/857) through his *al-Ri'aya*, but the most detailed study of its concept and practice has been al-Ghazzali in his famous *Ihya'*. See, Deladriere, EI2, VII, 465
19. Q.III: 61-2, R.3: 78-9
20. See, Q.III: 63, R.3: 80
21. This word has a special connotation in Sufism. Terminologically, it means, 'to make appear in a complete and actual realisation the mysterious senses and the realities which are behind the veil'. See, EI2, IV, 696
22. See, Q.III: 63, R.3: 81
23. Q.III: 63-64, R.3: 81
24. Q.III: 64, R.3: 81
25. Cf., Casewit, Stephen, 'The Mystical Side of The *Muqaddima*: Ibn Khaldun's

View of Sufism', in IQ, vol.29, no.3, 1985. p. 178

26. Q.III: 65, R.3: 82

27. Q.III: 65, R.3: 82

28. Q.III: 65, R.3: 83

29. Q.III: 66-67, R.3: 83-85

30. This additional extended passage covers from Q.III: 65.19 to 68.18

31. Sa'id al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad (d. 699/1300), the author of *Muntaha al-Mudarik*, which is referred here by Ibn Khaldun. The full title of the work was *Muntaha al-Mudarik wa Muntaha Lubk kull Kamil wa 'Arif wa Salik*. Unfortunately this work has not yet been published and its manuscript is now available in the form of microfilm in *Maktabat Ahmad al-Thalith Istanbul*. See, Homerin, Th, Emil, From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Far'id, His Verse and His

Shrine, Columbia, 1994. p. 143

32. See, Q.III: 69, R.3: 87

33. Q.III: 69, R.3: 87-88

34. Q.III: 69, R.3: 88-89

35. Q.III: 70, R.3: 89

36. In Beirut edition it reads Ibn Dahqan.

37. Q.III: 71, R.3: 90

38. Q.III: 72, R.3: 92, cf., R.2: 188

39. Qutb is a *Sufi* concept (of pole or axis) referring to the chief gnostic (*ra's al-'arifin*). The Sufis assumed that no one could reach this station in gnostic until God takes him unto Himself and then gives his station to another gnostic who will be his heir. However, this theory of successive poles is not confirmed by logical arguments or evidence from the religious law. It is sort of rhetorical figure of speech (*inna-ma huwa min anwa' al-khitaba*). Q.III: 73, R.3: 92-3

40. This quotation only appears in Quartremere's edition. Based on Rosenthal's note, no further information about who was Abu Mahdi. Ibn Khaldun tells us that Abu Mahdi was his shaikh and chief saint in Spain. See, Q.III: 74, R.3: 94

41. *Shatahat* is a technical term in Sufism, meaning ecstatic or theopathic expression commonly used for mystical sayings that are frequently outrageous in character. EI2, IX, p. 361. For a more comprehensive treatment on this matter, see, Ernst, Carl W., Words of Ecstasy in Sufism, Albany, 1985., Schimmel, Annemarie, Pain and Grace: A Study of Two Mystical Writers of Eighteenth-Century Muslim, Leiden, 1976. p. 106. For theopathic locution, see, Schimmel, Annemarie, Mystical Dimensions of Islam, Chapel Hill, 1975.

41. This subject has been specially studied by Dr. Abd al-Rahman Badawi in his *Shatahat al-Sufiyya*, 1, Kuwait, 1976. passim

42. Q.III: 80, R.3: 102-103

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Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, Franz Rosenthal (tr.), 3 vols., New York, 1958. (Referred in the text as R).

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